

# Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

October 20, 2006

## Message From County Executive Walker

*Earlier this year, I started a "Reality Tour" to talk about the challenges facing our county in 2007 and over the next five years. Specifically, we showed that the county has a nearly \$90 million budget gap in 2007 and some \$300 million over the next five years. This challenge is driven by the costs of pensions and other retirement benefits, health care insurance and state mandates.*

*Initially, some questioned my use of these numbers. Since then, several observers from outside of county government have validated our statistics.*

*With this in mind, I want to give credit to the County Board Chairman Holloway and Finance and Audit Committee Chairman Nyklewicz for their leadership this week in warning others about the finance situation of the county. As mentioned, we have a nearly \$90 million budget hole and the most that the tax levy can increase under state law is well under \$10 million. Without help in controlling health care costs, that means that the members of the county board will have to consider the majority of the spending reductions.*

*While we may disagree about the ultimate level of the tax levy (I want no increase), it is important that we work together to address the real financial concerns of the county.*

**Scott**



## Walker Signs Resolution for Park East Development



Walker signs the resolution, accompanied by Rob Ruvin, Bob Dennik, Director of Economic Development and Supervisor Michael Mayo

On Thursday, County Executive Walker held a resolution signing event at the site of a new \$104 million development in the Park East area. The development will include a 175-room hotel, 70 condominiums, 55,000 square feet of offices, 31,000 square feet of retail space and a 330-car parking structure. The project is expected to be completed in approximately two years. Walker was joined at the event by Supervisor Michael Mayo and Robert Ruvin of Ruvin Development, the project developer.



An artist's rendering of the development

## **Mitchell Airport Recognized in two Chicago Articles**

The Chicago Tribune on Thursday published an article praising Mitchell Airport's new advanced radar system that helps air-traffic controllers keep planes from colliding on runways. The Tribune article said that Mitchell's system was "far superior to the one at O'Hare, the world's busiest airport."

The system, called the Airport Surface Detection Equipment Model X (ASDE-X), provides air-traffic controllers with an easy-to-see visual representation of every airplane, and ground vehicles on the airport grounds. If two planes or a combination of aircraft and airport vehicles are on a potential collision course, a red octagon flashes around the object. In 2003, Mitchell became the first airport in the country to install the ASDE-X system. By January, the system is scheduled to be in use in 34 US airports.

The October 12, 2006 edition of the Chicago Sun-Times article on Mitchell Airport:

*Illinois Fliers Head to Milwaukee*

*Midwest Airlines, which flies out of Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee, reports a 10 percent increase in trips flown by Illinois passengers in 2006 over last year. The airport also reports a 5.3 increase in Illinois passengers between May and September, over the same period in 2005. Midwest has conducted a marketing campaign to persuade consumers in northern Illinois that it may be easier for them to drive Milwaukee than O'Hare.*

Mitchell International Airport has been conducting its own marketing campaign to present Milwaukee as a viable alternative to the hassle and congestion of Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

## **Walker to open Root River Trail Extension**

County Executive Walker will participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday to open a new 2.1-mile extension to the Oak Leaf Trail. The extension connects the trail at Drexel Avenue to 68<sup>th</sup> Street, near Loomis Road. The new trail will provide users with a great way to see the Root River as they walk, ride, or run through the trail.

## **Boo At The Zoo**

The Zoo's the place Friday, October 20 and Saturday, October 21 for haunted Halloween fun!

The events include:

- A specially designed maze made of haystacks and featuring Halloween characters
- Ghost tales and spooky stories at the Primates of the World exhibit
- Jack-O-Lantern and scarecrow coloring contest
- Not-too-spooky movies at Big Cat Country

Reduced admission rates apply these evenings: Adult admission is \$4.50; Juniors ages 3 to 12 are \$3, and children 2 and under are free. Parking is \$3.50.

For more information, go to [www.milwaukeezoo.org](http://www.milwaukeezoo.org)

## **Zoo Launches Historical Section of Website**

The Milwaukee County Zoo is launching a permanent historical timeline as part of its general website. The timeline shares, in words and images, significant zoo milestones from 1892 to the present. Visitors can share their own zoo memories in an area of the site. You can see the historical section by going to:

[www.milwaukeezoo.org](http://www.milwaukeezoo.org).